

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-12 and 15-20 are pending herein. Claims 15-17 have been amended hereby. Claim 13 has been cancelled hereby in favor of rewritten claim 15.

Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added.

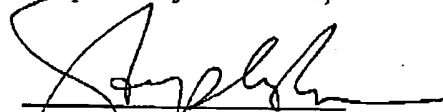
1. Applicants appreciate the PTO indicating that claims 1-12 are allowed. Applicants also appreciate the PTO indicating that claims 15-20 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Claim 15 has been so rewritten, and claims 16 and 17 have been amended to depend from rewritten claim 15. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims pending herein are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that a Notice of Allowance be issued for this application in due course.

2. Claim 13 was rejected were under §102(b) over Kimura in section 2 of the Office Action. Applicants respectfully submit that this ground of rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of claim 13. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the above rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

If the Examiner believes that contact with Applicants' attorney would be advantageous toward the disposition of this case, the Examiner is herein requested to call Applicants' attorney at the phone number noted below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1446.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen P. Burr
Reg. No. 32,970

December 17, 2003

Date

SPB/NB/gmh

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